

Memo

Date: March 26, 2018
To: Greater South East Area Commissioners
CC: Kevin Wheeler, Mark Dravillas, Alex Beim
From: Jackie Yeoman, Columbus Planning Division
Re: South East Land Use Plan – Summary of Feedback Received

As part of the Planning process for the South East Land Use Plan, the City of Columbus Planning Division developed a Draft Recommended Land Use Map, the majority of which was based on existing land uses. Where changes were proposed, (i.e. where the recommended land use ≠ existing land use), staff took into account existing zoning permissions where property owners currently have the right to develop their properties with increased intensity, as well as best practices grounded in the Columbus Citywide Planning Policies (C2P2), with special attention to the following C2P2 principle statements:

- *Mixed-use and highest density residential development is encouraged within established commercial centers and along primary corridors with access to transit.*
- *Protection and expansion of employment oriented land uses, including office and manufacturing, is a priority.*

The Planning Division hosted a public open house on the evening of January 22, 2018 to give members of the community an opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft Recommended Land Use Map by reviewing “focus areas” of change. In advance of the public open house, staff engaged in outreach through the Area Commission, via Facebook, and through a randomized mailer to 500 addresses in the South East area. In all, approximately 15 members of the public attended the open house. A survey corresponding to the Open House (focus areas) was also available from January 21 – February 21, 2018. Staff received a total of 7 responses during this process.

Prior to and complimentary to this outreach, for the first time in an area planning process, the Planning Division offered residents, developers, and other stakeholders the opportunity to engage with the Draft Recommended Land Use map through an interactive webmap format. This allowed for respondents to make land use comments on individual parcels. This interactive webmap was available from December 2017 through February 2018. Additionally, a “story map” was also developed that provided more context about how the recommendations were made, what was changing, and how the planning process worked.

In addition to the public open house and interactive webmap, Planning Division staff interacted with the community through stakeholder interviews, online surveys, “kiosk” stations, and the Columbus Planning Academy. A summary of the results of community engagement in the South East area follows.

Stakeholder Meetings

From September 2017 to February 2018, Planning Staff met with Area Commissioners and key stakeholders representing various interests in the planning area. In total, planning staff met with 18 stakeholders. These interviews yielded insight into historical planning efforts, development trends in the area, and community strengths and weaknesses.

Primary discussion topics included:

- Overall, stakeholders emphasized the importance of the appearance of the area, ranging from property upkeep to revitalization of existing commercial corridors.
- Natural resources and existing open space are an asset to the community and should be preserved;
- Along primary thoroughfares, roadway improvements are desirable, including ensuring complete streets for bike and pedestrians;
- A more wide range of attractive housing choices should be provided. There is currently an oversaturation of multi-family developments in the area;
- The area lacks a cohesive development pattern and design to ensure that new developments are attractive and contribute to community character;
- Employment/Income producing uses should be encouraged. Easy access to freeway and availability of large amounts of undeveloped land creates a unique opportunity for the planning area to attract more employment/Income producing uses; and
- Local streets should be improved in order to decrease traffic congestion and accommodate influx of new residential developments.

Stakeholders interviewed included:

- Ava Johnson: Greater South East Area Commissioner, President
- Dr. Carl Chastang: Greater South East Area Commissioner
- Lisa Schacht: Greater South East Area Commissioner
- Pamela Palmer: Greater South East Area Commissioner
- Darnell Fisher: Greater South East Area Commissioner
- Jaimie Allen: Greater South East Area Commissioner
- Ed Kempner: Greater South East Area Commissioner
- Mary Margaret Kempner: Greater South East Area Commissioner
- Deborah Sumpter: Greater South East Area Commissioner
- Diana Sexton: Asbury United Methodist Church
- Ernest West: Independence High School Principal
- Bruce Hoover: City of Groveport Superintendent
- Teri Roberts: President, Waterford Harbor Condominiums Board of Directors
- Steve Fishkin: Waterford Harbor Condominiums Board of Directors
- Marsha Hall, City Administrator, City of Groveport
- Amanda Bachman Griffin, Area Resident
- James Catalfino and James Lantry, Capitol City Brokerage

Stakeholder Survey

In addition to in person stakeholder meetings, Planning Staff engaged residents and business owners in the planning area through a Stakeholder Survey. The survey was open to the public from October 2017 to January 2018 and allowed members of the general public to provide some basic information about their community. Overall, respondents had a positive outlook for the future of the area and envisioned a vibrant and caring community, with strong businesses, services and activities to attract residents and families of all ages. A major concern from respondents was the influx of new multifamily developments which they equate to crime, traffic congestion and overall decline of the community.

Other comments, summarized, included:

- Usable open space where residents, especially children, can play should be encouraged for all new residential developments;
- Retail is oversaturated in the area and there are dying commercial corridors;
- Increase of crime, especially drug activity, has created an unsafe environment for residents and visitors to the area; and
- An emphasis should be placed on property upkeep in the area, especially multi-family and “section 8” properties.

Community Open House

On January 22, 2018, planning staff held a public open house at the Brice United Methodist Church. At the open house, participants were provided background on the planning process and an opportunity to provide comments on the draft Recommended Land Use Map, specific focus areas, and the C2P2 Guiding principles. A key finding from the open house was that participants preferred a land use strategy that focuses on redevelopment over outward growth, in concern for maintaining quality of life.

Primary comments included:

- Potential opportunities for economic development associated with the abundance of agricultural/undeveloped land in the planning area;
- Priority must be placed on protection of the natural environment;
- Desire to see recreational opportunities with bike trails, and parks;

Interactive Web Map

Other comments, summarized, included:

- Infrastructure should be improved before any more intensification in the area;
- An emphasis should be placed on beautification of the area;
- Code enforcement should be more vigilant;
- Decaying commercial corridors could be redeveloped with a mix of uses only if designed to blend in with existing character of the area; and
- New developments should be connected to existing trails and bike paths in the area

0 – 20	Very Low Support
20-40	Low Support
40-50	Balanced Support (-)
50-60	Balanced Support (+)
60-80	High Support
80-100	Very High Support

Open House & Online Survey Feedback

Question #1:

Healthy and Complete Communities:

Neighborhoods should have a mix of uses that provide a range of housing types, retail and community services, and employment opportunities. Neighborhoods should also be served by multiple transportation options.

Public Comments: 2 people responded at the open house and 7 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	100%	Very High Support
Online Respondents	86% Priority	Very High Support
Overall	89% Priority	Very High Support

Planning Response:

The Guiding Principles have options of “Not a priority for my community” or “Priority for my community”. Respondents viewed the Healthy and Complete Communities guiding principle as a very high priority for the South East. As a C2P2 guiding principle no changes will be made as part of the South East Land Use Plan.

Question #2:

Guided Growth and Sustainable Development:

As Columbus’ population grows over the next few decades, how and where development occurs will impact the quality of life in our city. Guided and planned development will conserve both economic and environmental resources, provide access to natural areas and open space, and encourage investment in neighborhoods.

Public Comments: 2 people responded at the open house and 7 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	100%	Very High Support
Online Respondents	86% Priority	Very High Support
Overall	89% Priority	Very High Support

Planning Response:

The Guiding Principles have options of “Not a priority for my community” or “Priority for my community”. Respondents viewed the Guided Growth and Sustainable Development guiding principle as a very high priority for the South East. As a C2P2 guiding principle no changes will be made as part of the South East Land Use Plan.

Question #3:

Design and Character:

Columbus’ diverse neighborhood character adds to the vibrancy of the city. High quality development can enhance the character of neighborhoods, create a sense of place for residents, and attract investment. Design guidelines provide a basis for thoughtful development that is both functional and aesthetically pleasing.

Public Comments: 2 people responded at the open house and 7 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	100%	Very High Support
Online Respondents	86% Priority	Very High Support
Overall	89% Priority	Very High Support

Planning Response:

The Guiding Principles have options of “Not a priority for my community” or “Priority for my community”. Respondents viewed the Design and Character guiding principle as a very high priority for the South East. As a C2P2 guiding principle no changes will be made as part of the South East Land Use Plan

Question #4:

Do you support the Mixed Use 1 (<24 du/ac) designation at Shannon & Brice (Site #1) as shown in the map above?

Public Comments: 5 people responded at the open house and 7 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	40% Support	Balanced Support (-)
Online Respondents	57% Support or No Opinion	Balanced Support (+)
Overall	50% Support or No Opinion	Balanced Support (+)

Planning Response:

Site #1 is included in a larger area designation - Area Specific Policy for agricultural land. While agricultural uses in this and other areas are supported, development proposals are likely to emerge over time. The plan anticipates this and provides recommended land use designations accordingly. Planning staff recommends the intersection of Shannon and Brice is an appropriate location for future commercial or mixed use development based on the larger Area Specific Policy.

Question #5:

Do you support the Mixed Use 1 (<24 du/ac) designation at Winchester Pike & Shannon Road (Site #2) as shown in the map above?

Public Comments: 3 people responded at the open house and 7 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	0% Support	Very Low Support
Online Respondents	71% Support or No Opinion	High Support
Overall	50% Support or No Opinion	Balanced Support (+)

Planning Response:

The Mixed Use 1 designation at Winchester Pike and Brice Road has been reduced in size. The remainder of the site has been changed to Low-Medium and Medium Density Residential to reflect the adjacent site recommendations. The recommended residential density is consistent with existing zoning for the site and recommendations for adjacent sites. The change was in response to comments at the public open house and online survey.

Question #6:

Do you support the Mixed Use 2 (24-45 du/ac) designation at Refugee & Gender (Site #3) as shown in the map above?

Public Comments: 4 people responded at the open house and 7 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	50% Support	Balanced Support (+)
Online Respondents	43% Support or No Opinion	Balanced Support (-)
Overall	45% Support or No Opinion	Balanced Support (-)

Planning Response:

The Mixed Use 2 designation at the southwest corner of Refugee and Gender roads has been changed to Mixed Use 1. The site in its entirety is zoned for commercial uses, and a large portion of the site is zoned C4, allowing for residential uses above commercial uses. The recommendation for a mix of uses along primary corridors is consistent with the Guiding Principles of Columbus Citywide Planning Policies.

Question #7:

Do you support the Mixed Use 1 (<24 du/ac) designation at Winchester Pike & Brice Road (Site #4) as shown in the map above?

Public Comments: 5 people responded at the open house and 6 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	60% Support or No Opinion	Balanced Support (+)
Online Respondents	17% Support or No Opinion	Very Low Support
Overall	36% Support or No Opinion	Low Support

Planning Response:

The Mixed Use 1 designation at Winchester Pike and Brice Road has been reduced in size. The remainder of the site has been changed to Low-Medium and Medium Density Residential to reflect the adjacent site recommendations. Site #4 is included in a larger area designation - Area Specific Policy for agricultural land. While agricultural uses in this and other areas are supported, development proposals are likely to emerge over time. The plan anticipates this and provides recommended land use designations accordingly.

Question #8:

Do you support the Mixed Use 3 (>45 du/ac) designation on Hamilton from US 33 to Winchester Pike (Site #5) as shown in the map above?

Public Comments: 4 people responded at the open house and 6 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	75% Support or No Opinion	High Support
Online Respondents	33% Support or No Opinion	Low Support
Overall	50% Support or No Opinion	Balanced Support

Planning Response:

The Mixed Use 3 designation on Hamilton Road between US 33 and Winchester Pike has been changed to Mixed Use 2. The recommendation for a mix of uses along primary corridors is consistent with the Guiding Principles of Columbus Citywide Planning Policies.

DEPARTMENT OF
DEVELOPMENT

Question #9:

Do you support the Mixed Use 1 (<24 du/ac) designation on Hamilton from Harbor Blvd to Big Walnut Creek (Site #6) as shown in the map above?

Public Comments: 4 people responded at the open house and 6 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	75% Support or No Opinion	High Support
Online Respondents	67% Support or No Opinion	High Support
Overall	70% Support or No Opinion	High Support

Planning Response:

No change is proposed for this site. The recommendation for a mix of uses along primary corridors is consistent with the Guiding Principles of Columbus Citywide Planning Policies.

Question #10:

Do you support the Mixed Use 1 (<24 du/ac) designation on Gender from Vatri Blvd. to Georges Creek Apartments (Site #7) as shown in the map above?

Public Comments: 5 people responded at the open house and 6 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	60% Support	Balanced Support (+)
Online Respondents	33% Support	Low Support
Overall	45% Support	Balanced Support (-)

Planning Response:

No change is proposed for this site. The site is already zoned commercial (C4, LC4), allowing for residential uses above commercial uses. The recommendation for a mix of uses along primary corridors is consistent with the Guiding Principles of Columbus Citywide Planning Policies.

DEPARTMENT OF
DEVELOPMENT

Question #11:

Do you support the Employment Center designation in the Hamilton Square Blvd area to the east of Hamilton Rd (Site #1) as shown in the map above?

Public Comments: 4 people responded at the open house and 6 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	100% Support	Very High Support
Online Respondents	67% Support	High Support
Overall	80% Support	High Support

Planning Response:

No change is proposed for this site. Recommendations for the protection and expansion of employment oriented land uses, including office and manufacturing is consistent with the Guiding Principles of Columbus Citywide Planning Policies.

Question #12:

Do you support the Employment Center designation at the intersection of Bixby Road & US 33 (Site #2) as shown in the map above?

Public Comments: 5 people responded at the open house and 6 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	80% Support	High Support
Online Respondents	50% Support	Balanced Support (+)
Overall	64% Support	High Support

Planning Response:

No change is proposed for this site. Recommendations for the protection and expansion of employment oriented land uses, including office and manufacturing is consistent with the Guiding Principles of Columbus Citywide Planning Policies.

Question #13:

The Greater South East planning area has a significant amount of agricultural land, which includes many natural resources such as streams and floodplains. Area Specific Policy has been developed for the area highlighted on the map above. The Area Specific Policy recognizes that while agricultural uses are supported, development proposals are likely to emerge over time. The Recommended Land Use map is to be used with the following text for development proposals in this area: The map classification boundaries in this area should be interpreted generally, not literally; A range of housing types and sensitive site design are supported; Proposals that include a high level of site and architectural design may be supported for higher densities; Vehicular and pedestrian connections should be provided between developments; Open space should be aggregated among multiple developments.

Public Comments: 3 people responded at the open house and 5 people responded to the online survey.

January 22 Public Open House	67% Support	High Support
Online Respondents	20% Support	Low Support
Overall	38% Support	Low Support

Planning Response:

Planning staff recognizes community input for employment center uses and/or open space in the agricultural areas designated for Area Specific Policies. Land Use Plans provide informed and appropriate recommendations to better equip city staff and the community to respond to proposals. Plan recommendations are unable to prevent development or spur development that is not market driven. Due to these factors, the Area Specific Policy for Agricultural Land supports existing agricultural uses, but recognizes that residential uses may be an appropriate future use. The Area Specific Policy also supports employment center uses.

Additional Education and Outreach

Columbus Planning Academy

Intended to be the educational component of the planning process, Columbus Planning Academy provided Area Commissioners from both the Greater South East and Far East Area with a basic background into land use planning in the city of Columbus so that Commissioners may be informed and involved in an area plan process.

Community Kiosk

Planning staff visited both the local YMCA and Asbury Methodist Church to provide information about the plan to community members. A kiosk station was set up to increase public visibility of the planning process, provide information on how residents can get involved, and provide an opportunity for residents to take surveys.

Informational Session

On January 29, 2018, planning staff conducted a public information session. The purpose of the information session was to provide members of the public an opportunity to ask questions about the draft Recommended Land Use Map and learn how to use the interactive web map.